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ABSTRACT

In an effort to provide counselors, advisors, and students at Queensborough Community College (QCC) with an estimate of the probable outcomes of probationary status, the academic records of 1,722 students on probation during Fall 1977 were examined to develop an expectancy table delineating the correlation between students' academic status at the end of the probationary period and two variables, Fall 1977 grade point average (GPA) and number of credit hours attempted. Three categories of academic status were defined: (1) the student achieved satisfactory academic progress (i.e., attempted 0-12 credit hours and achieved a cumulative GPA of 1.50; attempted 13-24 credits and earned a 1.75 GPA; or attempted 25 or more units and achieved a 2.00 GPA) and was "off probation"; (2) the student did not achieve satisfactory progress, but achieved a sufficiently high semester GPA to earn a 2.00 GPA by graduation and was placed on "conditional probation"; and (3) the student's GPA fell below the prescribed minimum with no possibility of earning a 2.00 GPA by graduation and was "dismissed" for at least one semester. Overall the table of expectancies indicated that about 20.6% of the students were successful in achieving academic progress; 12.9% were on conditional probation and 66.5% were dismissed. The study report presents and interprets the expectancy table and discusses the limitations of the study. (JP)

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# SURVIVAL OF PROBATIONARY STUDENTS AT QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE: AN EXPECTANCY TABLE

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# SURVIVAL OF PROBATIONARY STUDENTS AT QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE: AN EXPECTANCY TABLE

Very often students who are placed on academic probation are concerned with their chances of academic survival at the College. Advisors and counselors in an effort to provide the probationary student with realistic possibilities share this concern and may find an expectancy table to be a helpful device.

The purpose of this report is to provide advisors, counselors and students with the probabilities of possible outcomes of probationary status by presenting historical data on former probationary students.

This study concerned itself with the academic outcome of a sample of 1722 out of 1862 students who were placed on probation at the end of the Spring '77 semester and subsequently enrolled for the Fall '77 semester. Data on the academic outcomes of these students at the conclusion of the Fall '77 semester served as a basis for constructing the matrix of academic expectancies in this study. The percentages in each cell of the matrix are statements of joint probabilities, which take into consideration the number of credits-attempted (including withdrawals) and grade point averages (GPA). The three percentages in each cell add up to 100 percent and represent the relative frequency of students, 'off probation,' 'on conditional probation' and 'dismissed' from the College.

Satisfactory academic progress toward a degree is defined as satisfactorily meeting the following criteria:

| CREDITS ATTEMPTED* | MINIMUM CUMULATIVE GPA |
|---|---|
| 0-12 | 1.50 |
| 13-24 | 1.75 |
| 25 or more | 2.00 |

*Includes withdrawals

Falling below the GPA minima above, places a student 'on probation' for one semester. Based on the GPA for the probationary semester three academic outcomes are possible. One, the probationary student has achieved satisfact ry academic progress and is 'off probation.' Two, the probationary student has not achieved satisfactory academic progress but achieved a semester GPA sufficient to earn a 2.00 GPA by the time 64 credits needed for graduation have been completed and is placed on 'conditional probation.' Three, the student's GPA has fallen below the prescribed minimum with no possibility of earning a 2.00 GPA by the time 64 credits needed for graduation will have been earned and hence is dismissed from Queensborough Community College (QCC) for at least one semester. The dismissed student will not be permitted to enroll in any credit-bearing courses in any unit of City University.[a]

[a]See Queensborough Community College Bulletin, 1977-1978, p. 37.

Overall the table of expectancies indicates that about one-fifth (20.6 percent) of the probationary students were successful in achieving satisfactory academic progress with about one-eighth (12.9 percent) placed on conditional probation and about two-thirds (66.5 percent) dismissed from the College.

When considering only credits-attempted, probationary students in the 0-12.5 and 25-or-more categories had the highest percentage of students who were 'off probation' with 24.8 percent and 22.2 percent respectively.

When considering only cumulative GPA's probationary students in the 1.75-1.99 GPA category had the highest percentage (36.1 percent) of students who were 'off probation.'

When considering both GPA's and credits-attempted probationary students who attempted 25 credits or more with a GPA between 1.75 and 1.99 had the highest percentage (36.1 percent) of students who were successful in removing their probationary status, followed by students in the 0-12.5 credits-attempted and 1.00-1.99 GPA category, a success rate of 31.5 percent.

The expectancy table further informs us that if an enrolled probationary student attempted 25 or more credits and had a GPA between 1.75 and 1.99 the likelihood of being placed on 'conditional probation' is 14.4 percent, with a chance of 49.5 percent of being dismissed.

Limitations of the data:

The percentages presented in the expectancy table were developed from a single group of students who were placed on academic probation following the implementation of new academic retention standards. The future pattern of percentages of probationary students in the three possible academic outcomes may not be similar to those presented in this report. Crossvalidation of data is definitely in order.

New variables such as curriculum and sex may render the probabilities in the expectancy table more accurate.

Individual predictions of academic success or failure based on the table should not be made. An important use of an expectancy table is to moderate extreme views probationary students may hold regarding their academic future at the College. On one hand probationary students who feel that all is lost, may be encouraged to continue their studies after observing the percentages of former probationary students who succeeded in achieving satisfactory academic progress. On the other hand, probationary students who are over-confident regarding their academic future at the College may more fully realize the potential dangers inherent in academic probation.

Future Research:

A two-year longitudinal follow-up of students in the three possible academic outcomes namely, 'off probation,' 'conditional probation,' and 'dismissal' would provide additional academic expectancies to advisors, counselors and students.

TABLE 1

An Expectancy Table Showing the Relationship Between Credits-Attempted, GPA and Subsequent Academic Status for Probationary Students Enrolled During the Fall 1977 Semester (N=1722)

| Credits Attempted[a] | Academic Status | Cumulative GPA 0-.50 N % | .51-.99 N % | 1.00-1.49 N % | 1.50-1.74 N % | 1.75-1.99 N % | Rows by Credits N % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0-12.5 | Off-Probation | 29(23.2) | 16(19.8) | 29(31.5) | * | * | 74(24.8) |
| | Conditional Prob. | 7( 5.6) | 3( 3.7) | 12(13.0) | * | * | 22( 7.4) |
| | Dismissed | 89(71.2) | 62(76.5) | 51(55.4) | * | * | 202(67.8) |
| | Cell Total | 125 | 81 | 92 | 0 | 0 | 298(17.3) |
| 13-24.5 | Off-Probation | 7(10.8) | 5( 6.8) | 24(14.3) | 32(20.4) | * | 68(14.7) |
| | Conditional Prob. | 5( 7.7) | 11(14.9) | 27(16.1) | 20(12.7) | * | 63(13.6) |
| | Dismissed | 53(81.5) | 58(78.4) | 117(69.6) | 105(66.9) | * | 333(71.8) |
| | Cell Total | 65 | 74 | 168 | 157 | 0 | 464(26.9) |
| 25 or more | Off-Probation | 3(10.3) | 5( 7.0) | 18( 9.4) | 31(13.1) | 156(36.1) | 213(22.2) |
| | Conditional Prob. | 1( 3.4) | 5( 7.0) | 25(13.0) | 44(18.6) | 62(14.4) | 137(14.3) |
| | Dismissed | 25(86.2) | 61(85.9) | 149(77.6) | 161(68.2) | 214(49.5) | 610(63.5) |
| | Cell Total | 29 | 71 | 192 | 236 | 432 | 960(55.7) |
| Columns by GPA | Off-Probation | 39(17.8) | 26(11.5) | 71(15.7) | 63(16.0) | 156(36.1) | 355(20.6) |
| | Conditional Prob. | 13( 5.9) | 19( 8.4) | 64(14.2) | 64(16.3) | 62(14.4) | 222(12.9) |
| | Dismissed | 167(76.3) | 181(80.1) | 317(70.1) | 266(67.7) | 214(49.5) | 1145(66.5) |
| | Cell Total | 219(12.7) | 226(13.1) | 452(26.2) | 393(22.8) | 432(25.1) | 1722(100.0) |

[a]Includes W grades

*Students with these GPAs and 'Credits Attempted' satisfy academic standards.

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